

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

### COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

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April 29, 2021

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren  
Chair  
Committee on House Administration  
1309 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairperson Lofgren:

We write today to request that the Committee on House Administration begin immediately to conduct a series of oversight hearings concerning the United States Capitol Police Board (CPB). As brought to light by United States Capitol Police (USCP) Inspector General Michael Bolton at the Committee's recent oversight hearing, the CPB structure is in desperate need of reform. The CPB exists not only to oversee but also to administer the day-to-day operations of the USCP, but its structure is flawed, leading to slow reactions to crises and politically driven decision-making. The Committee's healthy and frequent exercise of its oversight role over the CPB is vital to ensure the safety and security of Members of Congress, staff, visitors, and the United States Capitol Complex; yet, the Congressional Research Service reports that the full voting membership of the CPB has not appeared jointly before a congressional committee since 1945, fifty-eight years before the modern CPB was established.

Mr. Bolton's report and his testimony at the recent oversight hearing made clear that the USCP needs to make important changes, such as improving its intelligence capabilities, reforming its training processes, ramping up recruitment and hiring, and beginning an internal reorganization to protective agency model rather than a traditional police force. These consequential and necessary changes are not possible without reforming the CPB.

The events of January 6<sup>th</sup> highlighted significant problems with the CPB's structure and responsibilities. When warranted, the CPB has the serious responsibility to make the decision to declare an emergency, a determination required to authorize the USCP Chief to call in the National Guard. However, on January 6<sup>th</sup>, the CPB's bureaucratic structure and partisan membership crippled its rapid response capabilities and decision-making abilities, and the United States Capitol Complex remained in chaos and without National Guard assistance for hours. Further, it is clear from email correspondence uncovered by this Committee that the Architect of the Capitol, who makes up one-third of the voting membership of the CPB, was left out of key security decisions, a recurring problem for the CPB. Finally, the CPB remains in noncompliance with a key 2017

Government Accountability Office report,<sup>1</sup> which was entered into the record during our hearing. This report explains that the CPB does not follow industry best practices regarding accountability, transparency, or external communication, and specifically highlights the Board's lack of communication to Congress.

The safety of Members of Congress, staff, visitors, and the United States Capitol Complex is not a partisan issue and must be our top priority. As the sole House entity with the jurisdiction to conduct oversight over the CPB, we have a responsibility to the American people to take this role seriously and to act swiftly. It is our hope that this Committee will conduct these hearings cooperatively and in a bipartisan manner.

With the increased availability of COVID-19 vaccines, we look forward to conducting these oversight hearings in the hearing room.

Sincerely,



Rodney Davis  
Ranking Member  
Committee on House Administration



Barry Loudermilk  
Member  
Committee on House Administration



Bryan Steil  
Member  
Committee on House Administration

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<sup>1</sup> *Capitol Police Board: Fully Incorporating Leading Governance Practices Would Help Enhance Accountability, Transparency, and External Communication*, Government Accountability Office, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/683366.pdf>